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Tuesday, April 14, 2020

Total 20 pages

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Summer arts take a hit

Haliburton School of Art + Design, Haliburton Art and Craft Festival cancelled due to COVID-19

JENN WATT

Editor

Two major arts institutions in Haliburton have nixed their summer plans for 2020, adding to the growing list of cancellations in the county as efforts continue to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

On April 8, Fleming College announced that Haliburton School of Art + Design wouldn't be offering its summer programming, affecting more than 300 week-long and weekend courses that draw thousands of people to the Highlands.

"Although this is a difficult decision that impacts thousands of students and many others in the arts community, it is the only option available to us as we hold the health and safety of the community as our highest priority," Tom Phillips, vice president academic experience, said in a statement.

Students are to be contacted about the cancellation and refunds.

On April 11, the Rails End Gallery and Arts Centre posted to its Facebook page that the Haliburton Art and Craft Festival

see CANCELLATIONS page 3



Taking Good Friday online

Reverend Max Ward of the Minden United Church sings a hymn accompanied by pianist Melissa Stephens (out of view), using the teleconferencing app Zoom to reach his congregation during the Good Friday sermon delivered online at Haliburton United Church on Friday, April 10. Ward was thankful to Reverend Harry Morgan for allowing him the use of the church since the connection in Minden wasn't strong enough for a live-stream service. His first online sermon was delivered on March 22. Before the sermons, people use the 15 minutes to socialize with each other on the app./DARREN LUM Staff

HHHS reorganizes admissions as COVID-19 precaution

JENN WATT

Editor

Haliburton Highlands Health Services expanded the number of beds at its Haliburton site and changed the flow of

patients to the county's two emergency departments in an effort to keep respiratory cases isolated to one site only.

Last week, the corporation announced that COVID-19 related needs would be directed to the Haliburton emergency department, while non-COVID-19 admis-

sions would be going to Minden. The Haliburton site has increased from 15 to 21 beds in acute care and Minden now has nine acute care beds.

"Together, these 15 new acute care beds

see SIX page 2



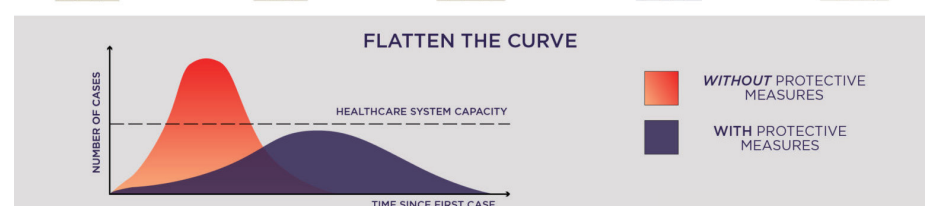
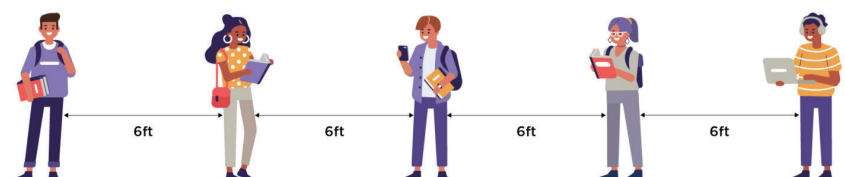
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COVID-19 Coronavirus

Bringing joy one phone call at a time

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

An easy smile washes over Bill Gliddon's face as he sits on his porch, talking about the musical interludes he offers over the phone to residents at long-term care facilities in Haliburton.

Bringing happiness and joy through music is something he's been doing for decades, through his church, as a teacher and as a volunteer.

During this health crisis, which has gripped the world and the community he loves, the 80-year-old has been bringing happiness and joy to residents isolated at Highland Wood and Extendicare-Haliburton.

The past Highlander of the Year says playing his keyboard and singing songs such as Zip-A-Dee-Do-Da from the 1940s and Let Me Call You Sweetheart from the 1930s on the phone has as much benefit for him as it does for those he sings to.

"They're just so cheered up. Of course it cheers me up too. I love it. Just do a couple. I don't go too long. This is something I look forward to now," he said.

He performs every other day, calling residents in their rooms.

Before visitation was suspended due to COVID-19, Gliddon said he visited the senior homes with a small group of people once a month.

Gliddon said he got the idea to perform on the phone to residents at Extendicare-Haliburton and to Highland Wood from his friend Fred Shuttleworth, who he knows from choir. His friend, he said, is a concert pianist and was performing classical music for the people he phoned.

"What a great idea. I'm going to do that with the

songs," Gliddon said.

It's been close to two weeks since he started and through word-of-mouth, his list of song recipients has grown.

"It's probably 10 to a dozen and it keeps getting [to be] more," he said. "They tell their friends and then they phone me and say, 'Can you sing to so-and-so?'"

Using his musical talents isn't new for Gliddon, who is well known for performing at local churches and staged plays over the years and for his time as a music teacher in his hometown.

Even during this crisis, he has continued to host his own radio show on Canoe FM once a week and plays the organ for St. George's Anglican Church in Haliburton (now for online services), which he has done for close to 58 years.

Gliddon hopes his connection with long-term care residents inspires others to share their musical talents with people who are in isolation at their residence.

"Music, I tell you, it does something that words alone cannot do and especially for older people if it's the songs they knew when they were younger. It just brings back all those happy memories," he said.

With files from Chad Ingram

Bill Gliddon, seen here seated on his porch, said he takes joy in bringing music to long-term care residents in Haliburton during the health crisis. He hopes his story inspires others to share their musical talents with others. The past Highlander of the Year credits Fred Shuttleworth with the idea. /DARREN LUM Staff



Six confirmed coronavirus cases in Haliburton County

from page 1

and the separation of our sites will help us be as prepared as possible for the anticipated increase in patients caused by COVID-19. While we are asking residents with respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fever) who wish to visit an emergency department to come to Haliburton and those without

respiratory symptoms to visit the Minden emergency department, I want to assure the community that no emergency will be turned away from either site," HHHS CEO Carolyn Plummer said in her community update, released on April 10.

As of Monday, April 13, the local health unit has reported six confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Haliburton County. The health unit is also reporting 108 confirmed cases in Kawartha Lakes, which includes those affected by the outbreak at Pinecrest Nursing Home, and 14 confirmed cases in Northumberland for a total of 128 con-

firmed cases in the HKPR District Health Unit area.

There have been six hospitalizations, 33 deaths and one outbreak related to COVID-19 in the HKPR District Health Unit area as reported on the HKPR website.

Space has been made available at Pinestone Resort and Conference Centre for HHHS staff "who would feel more comfortable staying in a location other than their home residence after their shifts or are challenged working extra-long hours, commuting home, only to have to turn around and commute right back to work," Plummer said. "These accommodations will not be used by any staff who have to self-isolate."

The HHHS CEO also asked members of the public not to bring food donations to staff and physicians, who cannot accept the donations. She advised that donations are better directed to local food banks.

"I also want to recognize all of the efforts being made community-wide to pull together, support one another, and deliver services and materials to those in need," she said. "From the emergency responder parades through Haliburton and Minden villages, to the messages of thanks for frontline workers, to the creative collaborations and innovative changes to 'business as usual' - thank you for lifting our spirits, working to protect the health and safety of our community, and showing kindness in the face of hardship."

With files from Sue Tiffin

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COVID-19 Coronavirus

Cancellations to affect summer economy

from page 1

would also be called off.

"Rails End Gallery made this difficult decision with the health and well-being of our volunteers, staff, the public and the artists in mind. The COVID-19 crisis and the waves that are bound to follow are rippling through the arts community and around the world. I am confident this was the right thing to do. I am also confident we will get through this together," curator Laurie Jones wrote online.

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts said she was saddened to hear of the cancellations, but understood that it was necessary.

"Both of these have been staples of the summer in Haliburton," she said of HSAD and the art and craft festival. "They are so important to the economy but also to the vibrancy that makes summer so much fun here. I loved going to the arts and crafts festival and often did some Christmas shopping there. We'd eat lunch and listen to the music. This festival is the main fundraiser for the Rails End and I'm sure they are wondering how they will make ends meet this year. The college courses have been running for years and attract people from all over. My sister from Quebec was planning on taking a course this summer and was disappointed to hear it was all cancelled."

Because planning is done so far in advance for summer programming, it was necessary to cancel now, she said.

"The reality is we are in for a very different summer here in the Highlands. All we can do is hope and pray that we will get back to being able to have festivals and events and that organizations that hold these can survive this summer. That being said, it will still be summer, we will have some gorgeous warm days, we can swim in our lakes, go for a paddle, and enjoy the beautiful place we live in," Roberts said.

Jones said the Rails End Gallery would share the work of the artists who were to have come to the festival through social media. Rails End has already been posting artwork on its Facebook and Instagram accounts for its *Water* exhibition,



Students take turns showing the class their work, inspired by Kal Honey's Landscapes Real, Imagined & Altered art class at Haliburton School of Art + Design last summer. Fleming College announced last week that due to the coronavirus pandemic, it would be cancelling its summer offerings for 2020. /File photo by Vanessa Balintec

which was closed as a COVID-19 precaution.

The Haliburton Art and Craft Festival is the town's "largest and longest running outdoor festival," Jones said, an annual attraction that filled the park each July.

"I hope you will continue to support makers and artists online. Please share this sentiment, share your stories and let the makers in your life know how much better your world is because of their art and craftsmanship," she said.

As was reported in last week's *Echo*, the Highlands Summer Festival has cancelled its season.

As of press time, the Highlands Opera Studio is still moving ahead with its offering, which starts in late July. Valerie Kuinka, general director, said that the fallout of the pandemic has been severe for some in the arts community.

"So many of our colleagues in the professional performing arts sector, established and emerging, have already been deeply affected by COVID-19, with several having battled the virus, and some having succumbed. The vast majority

have been financially devastated, with many already facing bankruptcy," she wrote in an open letter posted to the opera studio's website.

She asked that those wanting to support the arts community donate the money from cancelled tickets back to arts organizations.

"Should you experience the necessary cancellation of any live professional

performance due to COVID-19 to which you have bought tickets, please consider donating the cost of your ticket(s) to that organization for a tax receipt instead of a refund. It will mean so much to so many," she said.

Highlands Opera Studio performances are to begin July 23 and continue into August. Updates are posted at highland-soperastudio.com.

Drugs, guns, cash seized from Haliburton Highlands property

On Thursday, April 9, the Haliburton Highlands and City of Kawartha Lakes Central Street Crime Unit with the assistance of the Central Region Tactical Response Unit and Central Region Canine officers, executed a warrant at an address on Hutchings Road, in Dysart et al.

Seized at this address was a large quantity of cocaine with an approximate value of \$23,000, and a small quantity of crystal methamphetamine, in addition to approximately \$7,100 in Canadian currency, four restricted firearms, and one prohibited firearm. Also recovered at this address was a stolen side-by-side UTV valued at \$5,500. This investigation spanned over several months and was aimed at drug trafficking in the Haliburton Highlands.

As a result of this investigation several individuals were arrested and charged including a 29-year-old from Ajax, a

39-year-old from Haliburton, a 29-year-old from Haliburton, a 42-year-old from Haliburton and a 26-year-old from Minden Hills.

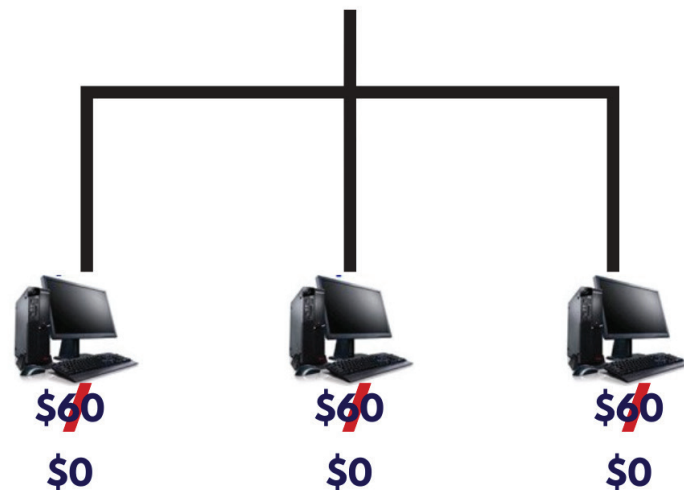
All are scheduled to appear in the Ontario Court of Justice in Minden on July 8.

The Ontario Provincial Police encourage members of the public to report criminal activities to police so they may be investigated in an effort to reduce the harm and social impact on our communities and residents.

If you would like to report information to the police you can call the OPP at 1-888-310-1122, report online at opp.ca, or contact Crimestoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or online at ontariocrimestoppers.ca.

Information provided by the Haliburton Highlands OPP

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COVID-19

Coronavirus

Services for women fleeing violence needed more than ever

JENN WATT

Editor

Requirements of keeping a distance from others and limiting trips outside of the home to prevent the spread of the coronavirus may present an increased risk for women who are experiencing violence.

Kim Dolan, executive director of YWCA Peterborough Haliburton, said that anecdotally, staff have noticed an increase in calls.

"When in situations where women are experiencing violence, or when men are violent or abusive, the additional stressors that have come with COVID and the pandemic exacerbate the existing violence and then increase the violent and abusive behaviours at the same time," she said in an interview last week.

Routines that could provide a reprieve from abuse such as going to work, shopping, or seeing friends may no longer be available. When that's mixed with the fear of becoming sick, losing a job, and breaking connections with friends and family, it can create an even more dangerous situation for some.

Staff haven't yet compiled the data on the increase in calls, Dolan said, because like many other workplaces, many of the YWCA Peterborough Haliburton's staff are working from home and there is no central point for data yet.

The organization has taken steps to pro-

tect the health and safety of staff, the executive director said, implementing screening, disinfecting, physical distancing and isolation practices. However, she stressed that women and their children still have access to the same services they've had in the past.

"The services that have been available through HERS [Haliburton Emergency Rural Safespace] and the women's centre are still available and like all other services, they're just different right now," Dolan said.

She said they were working to adopt the best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19, while "At the same time, making sure that we're providing the best possible service to women who need it without interruption."

Services include providing shelter for women fleeing violence as well as the crisis and support lines, which are answered 24-hours a day, seven days a week, safety planning, risk assessment, and referrals to other services.

Earlier this month, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced \$40 million for women's shelters and sexual assault centres to assist with COVID-19 preparations. Dolan said that YWCA Peterborough Haliburton would receive a portion of that money, and said provincial funding was also on the way.

The YWCA Peterborough Haliburton offices are currently closed to the public, but staff can be reached by calling 705-286-6442, texting 705-991-1591 or emailing info@ywcapeterborough.org.

If you have been injured or your life is at risk call 911 for help. Let them know if:

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- would like to find out more so you can refer a friend or family member

(Provided by YWCA)

Funding to expand sexual assault crisis services

JENN WATT

Editor

Money from the federal government will soon be flowing to the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre, which serves the region including Haliburton County, to launch a pilot crisis support project.

A 24-hour text service is to be up and running by mid-May, which is to help survivors of sexual and gender-based violence and those who support them, a press release from the organization says.

The sexual assault centre reports after-hours calls are up 50 per cent in the four counties it serves: Peterborough, Northumberland, Haliburton and City of Kawartha Lakes.

Though its office is closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff are working through phone, email, text and online with clients.

"Survivors may be experiencing an increase in violence, financial worries, and food insecurity," the press release says.

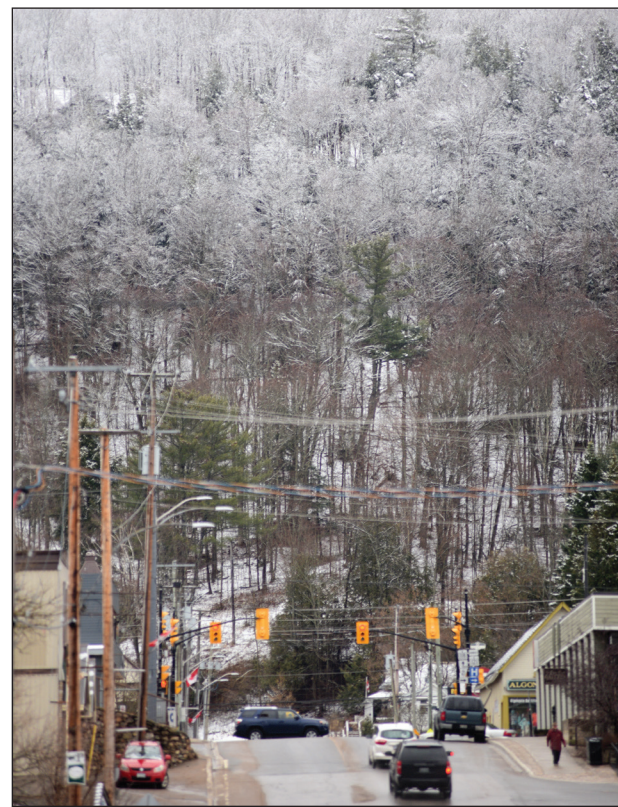
They've received \$25,000 from the federal government and \$5,600 from the

Community Foundation of Kawartha Lakes, which will go to increase staff capacity and train crisis support volunteers.

Those who have received training from the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre or who have a background in trauma and crisis services and would like to volunteer are asked to email ksac@nexicom.net.

"Although we have secured funding for the first six months of this increase in supports, we know that youth especially really need this regional texting service 24/7 and we are committed to expanding the service long term," said Lisa Clarke, executive director. "If community members would like to help, donations can be made through CanadaHelps.org or by contacting the centre at 705-748-5901."

To get help through the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre
24-hour Crisis Support:
1-866-298-7778
Text (Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.): 705-710-5234
Web chat:
kawarthasexualassaultcentre.com



Frosted tips for breakfast

The overnight snowfall may have melted in town, but was still visible in the trees on the hillside beyond Maple Avenue on Thursday, April 9 in Haliburton. Residents in Haliburton County woke up to a winter wonderland, as several centimetres of accumulation was left on the ground and in the trees. Much of it was melted by mid-morning and nothing was left by the afternoon. /DARREN LUM Staff

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Published by White Pine Media Corp



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Forever in our memories: Creighton Feir

Increasing need

BEING STUCK in the house during a global pandemic is stifling for almost anyone. Even when there's nowhere to go, knowing that we can't, or shouldn't, leave the house is frustrating and anxiety-inducing. But this situation isn't being experienced by everyone in the same way.

For many people in this community, the necessary requirements of this crisis impose myriad burdens from those losing their jobs to those separated from ailing family members to those who have no stable home in which to "shelter in place."

As the weeks go by, we learn more about our neighbours and the difficulties they face as social service organizations report one by one that demand is up.

First, we heard from the food banks. By the end of March, the 4Cs in Haliburton had already noted demand was up 20 per cent.

Then we heard from mental health services, where the clinical manager said most of the intake in the last week of March was new clients struggling to manage anxiety and financial stressors.

This week, the YWCA Peterborough Haliburton and the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre both marked an increase in demand. KSAC says its demand for after-hours support is up 50

per cent.

And for those whose financial resources are being stretched, isolating at home can be even more isolating. Beverlee Groves-Foley, clinical manager for mental health services, pointed out that for those who do not have internet at home or who relied on free services at the library branches or restaurants like Tim Hortons, those venues are, at least in part, gone.

We're all adapting to this new world we find ourselves in – and our social services organizations are doing the same. Most were not prepared to move their workforces to home offices. Many programs were built on face-to-face interaction, and they're scrambling to make things work in different ways. Already many of them are.

These service providers are making us aware that the need is intensifying and preparing us to respond.

If projections are accurate, we have many weeks, if not months, to go before we begin to "return to normal" and a lot can happen in that time. Our lives will likely change again in many new ways.

While it can be difficult to see beyond the walls of our homes right now, when we're able, it's also important to continue empathizing with others and lending support when we can.



jenn watt

Editorial

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Spring growth blooms

by Darren Lum

Reporting the news during a pandemic, don'tcha know

WHY, IF OL' Maybelle wasn't sitting at home self-isolating with my pet bear, Bogart, when this thought came to me: How in the world are newspaper reporters reporting the news during this COVID 19 quarantine? Now, in Lake WhaddayathinkImean, we don't have a local newspaper, I subscribe to the *Echo* in Haliburton. So, I reached out to Jenn Watt, Editor of the *Echo* and after talking with her by phone, boy am I now a smarty-pants on the subject!

"Things are so different from what they were a month ago," Jenn said. "Then, it was the elbow-bump. Now, as much as possible, we are interviewing people by phone, Facebook Messenger, and other types of social media. In some cases, we have to be there to take pictures, but we're also depending on the community to send us photos and stories. It's been stressful and interesting to see how people can adapt."

Why just a month ago ol' Maybelle could actually feel when I elbow-bumped my friends... now, after gaining way too many pounds from over-snacking while in quarantine, the only thing my elbow feels is FAT.

Jenn went on: "In March we wondered – if we need to work from home, can we access the server? Today, a couple of people use the office, but everyone who can work from home, does. We share ideas in an online group chat daily."

Ol' Maybelle is relieved knowing that we can depend on getting the information we need from our local newspapers, especially now with this nasty virus clogging up the works. I also applaud all those folks who work at and volunteer for community radio stations like Canoe FM in Haliburton, don'tcha know.

Why just the other day when I was on the internet, I came across a *National*

Post article that had some pretty powerhouse things to say about the importance of journalism: "When the stakes are high, only professional journalists can be trusted to deliver the truth." It quoted a survey conducted over landlines, cellphones and online between March 30 and April 2 carried out by Nanos Research. And wouldn't you know, it found that most Canadians trust traditional media more than social media outlets to deliver accurate information during a crisis. Almost three-quarters (74 percent) think content in social media posts is less accurate.

Jenn Watt told ol' Maybelle: "We are committed to putting out the paper and have the same complement of

resources as always. We have much more to report than usual. We get regular updates several times a week from the municipalities who are meeting on a regular basis, making decisions that affect our communities. We cover everything that's happening at the hospital...keep up with people in the community and meetings that are online... how people are feeling about losing their jobs... where they can go for support."

Why I feel so much better having spoken with her. It's good to know. No, it's GREAT to know that what was always essential for the community, (and is now more essential than ever), is a group of local journalists who are committed to keeping us all up-to-date on important information, as well as folks like you and your neighbours who are sending in photos and stories about what's going on in your piece of heaven right here in the Highlands.

Maybelle's Fireside Stories is written by Jerelyn Craden. Jerelyn's novel, "Vessie Flamingo Outshining the Moon," is available at amazon.com.

Maybelle's



Fireside stories

points of view

War is hell

I'M NOT GOING to concede that I have started to exhibit the first signs of cabin fever. I rarely agree with anything my cat says. I will admit that I'm starting to get bored, however.

I suppose that's to be expected since we are living in what historians will one day refer to as The Golden Age of Track Pants.

Even so, it's not easy to take.

Some people have likened this crisis to a war, but I don't see it. War is a far more social event.

I understand they are using the term loosely – and I do believe that essential frontline workers and medical people are doing heroic work for which I am grateful.

But that's not me. All I have been asked to do in the fight against COVID-19 is to stay at home. It's really not that difficult – or exciting.

The only problem I see is no one has taught us how to deal with the lack of excitement.

And, because of that, I am now officially suffering from something I call Post-Dramatic Stress Disorder.

The symptoms are constantly having flashbacks of more exciting times – and, let me tell you, right about now the completion of a jigsaw puzzle would qualify as one of those – and having nothing to say when someone asks you, "What's new?"

Yes, there is epic drama in the outside world. But here at home, the lack of excitement is mind-numbing. If I had a diary, I'd



steve
galea

Loon Tales

have to start making things up.

Here's an example of what I'm talking about. The other day, Jenn and I had an in-depth conversation about the many uses of spinach.

After that, we both chose books to read – and, for once, mine didn't even have any pictures. It's starting to feel like we have been transported to a public television universe.

It is, quite frankly, unnatural.

We humans have not evolved to deal with boredom very well. That's why we perk up whenever we hear phrases like "I wonder how that bear cub would look in this T-shirt?" or "Why pay good money for a bungee cord when you can make your own, right?"

Remember, no human child in the history of our evolution has ever said, "Before I accept your dare, allow me a few minutes to ponder the implications and do a complete risk assessment."

Yet here we are.

So, I would respectfully propose, if I am in a war right now, it is a war against boredom – and I won't tell you how it's going, other than report that I lost the Battle of Crossword Puzzle.

That's why I am hereby making it my mission to create excitement and memories around our house. Of course, this will not be easy now that Jenn has confiscated my slingshot. Also, this was not the ideal time to find out that my Speedo, tights and cape somehow got destroyed in a freak laundry accident.

Yet, in spite of all these setbacks, I will continue to fight the good fight.

It's not that I want to so much as I have to.

The bar for excitement has been set so low around here that I'm now starting to get wound up at the thought of going upstairs and organizing my sock drawer. Heck, the other day it got so bad that I briefly considered taking up vacuum cleaning as my main hobby.

Luckily, the sugar bowl talked me out of it.



pic of the past

This photo was taken to celebrate the engagement of Ben Davis and Ella Dummitt. They raised a large family of their own on their farm at Horseshoe Lake. Ben worked in the logging camps as well. Their children were Shirley (Edwards), Doris (Redner), Merle (Thomas), Moss, Albert, Delbert Murry and Roean (Barnhart). This photo was originally published in the *Echo* in April of 2009.

letters to the editor

Power of prayer

To the Editor,

These are very difficult times with much fear surrounding COVID-19. While it is not my intent to impose my beliefs on anyone, I do believe in the power of prayer and in the power of group prayer. It is with this in mind that I submit this letter.

I will be saying the following prayer every evening at 8 p.m. If anyone wishes to join me, thank you. I truly believe that together, we can make a difference.

God/Creator, please bless all those who are in any way connected to, or associated with, COVID-19. Watch over and protect all medical personnel and front-line workers, lending them courage, strength and confidence. Bless and protect all those who continue to provide us with essential services.

Comfort and support everyone dealing with this virus and with the potential loss of a loved one. For those processing a loss, comfort them in their grief. Help them find peace in their hearts and a reason to go on. For those suffering with COVID-19, please keep them under a blanket of calm. Give them strength and courage. Relieve their physical symptoms and take them to a safe place in their minds where they find peace, comfort,

and relief from loneliness and fear. Ensure all are tenderly and compassionately cared for, and bless all caregivers, always, and in all ways. Pave the way for all those suffering financially, those who are not sure from where their next meal will come, and those simply frozen in fear. Help them find the support they need and keep their spirits up. Give them a reason to believe in the goodness of their fellow man.

Watch over and guide our world leaders, their advisors, and all those who influence them in any way. Help them to work together to make decisions that are for the highest good of all, and the well-being of our planet.

Help us all to take COVID-19 seriously, to adhere to the protocol set for our country, provinces and communities, and to do everything within our power to stop the spread of this virus. Help us to realize the importance of keeping in touch with family, friends and neighbours – providing comfort simply by listening.

As our faith is being tested, help us remain strong and hopeful. Help us replace fear with love, faith and trust, and watch over us as we look for ways to safely be there for one another.

For this I am truly grateful.

Blessings
Noni Richardson

Isolated?

Sneeze in your elbow
Cough in your cuff
use sanitizer
more than enough.
Hi to your neighbour
give them a wave
give up the hugs,
There are lives to save.
Stay in your house
avoid the crowds,
do not travel
hide like a mouse.
We'll get thought this
and come out better,

now is a good time to write a letter.
Call a friend you have not seen,
make a contact or create a meme.
Share your memories
Write a book
Do something different,
Learn how to cook.
Just remember
God is great
keep on praying,
It's not just fate.

By Gord Forbes



Supporting each other goes way beyond Masterfeeds and our respective corners of the country throughout this COVID-19 crisis.

Farmers always rise to the challenge, it's what they do day-in and day-out. As do Masterfeeds employees. Keeping our mills operating and animals fed is a vital link in Canada's food chain – and particularly today. Keeping Canadians fed is our primary task at hand.

I would like to personally thank our farming communities, plant and office staff, our dealers and retail locations, and the many truck drivers who are getting the job done. Your overwhelming efforts in keeping our business operating effectively during this challenging time is very much recognized and appreciated. Well done.

ROB FLACK, PRESIDENT AND CEO

Pregnancy during a pandemic: midwives reassure new moms

SUE TIFFIN

Staff Reporter

As Morgan Fisher enters her 30th week of pregnancy, the world looks different than she expected it to when she imagined the birth of her daughter with husband Mark.

The Haliburton residents plan to welcome their baby in June, with support from The Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft, at Peterborough Regional Health Centre. This plan hasn't changed, although other aspects of their lives have.

"Prior to COVID, I counted myself extremely lucky," said Fisher. "I didn't have any form of sickness or any health issues. Baby was happy and growing just perfectly. The time flew by getting more excited as we got closer and closer to her due date."

The first case of COVID-19 in Canada was announced in January.

"For me, I figured it was only a matter of time when it made it to our small town," said Fisher. "For the longest time I tried my best to keep to myself and avoid as much social media as possible when the outbreaks were in Toronto. About a month ago it started to be more on my mind than normal with the changes of essential line of work being in discussion. I started to wonder if I should be more worried than I was."

Fisher is a registered veterinary technician at Minden Animal Hospital, which has been deemed an essential service. Before that list of essential services was released by the province, friends and family members had been reaching out to her to ask how she was doing and feeling as concerns about the virus grew. They learned Fisher – who, with a love for animals is devoted to their care and well-being – was still working.

"Which resulted in them worrying for my health and expressing their concerns for me," she said. "This got me thinking are they right, should this be something I should be risking? The [essential services] list was released and confirmed there would not be a closure of my workplace, which I was super happy about because what would people do in our community if their pets got hurt? But in saying this it brought me back to wondering if I should make a tough decision to remove myself for the safety of my unborn daughter and my family."

Fisher spoke with her midwives, discussing her concerns, and agreed that she should take a leave from work to help protect herself and her baby. "I was devastated to make this decision," she said, noting it was the hardest decision she has had to make, but that the unknowns of the virus and how it might affect women and their unborn babies had her so stressed, she wasn't functioning properly at work because it was all she could think of. "Shortly after my leave started is when the first positive case was confirmed in our county."

Now, Fisher's main job is to take care of herself as she nears the end of her pregnancy, with support from Mark who she said has a positive outlook and is taking "things day-by-day" as they work together to ensure they are safe.

"After leaving work, getting up that next week and not having to get ready and leave the house was honestly the biggest relief, I felt like there was weight off my shoulders just knowing I didn't have to go anywhere," she said. "I try my best not to dive into reading or researching all this too much as it will set me into worrying and stress me out, which is what I wanted to avoid. I take extra precautions if I have to go into town to the store but other than that there is no longer the fear of not knowing who I will have con-



Morgan Fisher is experiencing pregnancy during a global pandemic, but remains excited to meet her daughter with husband Mark, and introduce Titan, left, to his human sister. /Photo submitted by Morgan Fisher

tact with each day like it was before. I'm doing my part of social distancing and hoping that this curve will flatten."

Fisher's midwives have assured her the choices related to her birth are hers, and that they will support her in every decision, she said.

"Hospital births are still an option – there are many people reconsidering and changing to home births but we are still set on being at the hospital as the precautions that are taken in the maternity ward allow for a safe birth," she said.

Instead of physically meeting with the midwives every two weeks, as is typical at this stage in pregnancy, Fisher, whose pregnancy has been low-risk, is meeting in person one week, and with a phone consult the next, allowing the midwives to limit the amount of clients in and out of the clinic, as well as offer more space for patients and the midwives to ensure physical distancing and safety regulations are followed.

"The midwives have been amazing support through everything," said Fisher. "With them knowing I have been very anxious through all this they have been even better than I could have expected. They have taken the time to explain all the knowledge they know about this COVID-19, giving us all the options of what can be done and what has changed. They have been so open and supportive, I couldn't ask for it to be any better. They have reassured me countless amounts of times we will all get through this together."

Fisher's hope is that by the time her daughter is born, the current health crisis is over.

"But if it's not it will be a very devastating, lonely time," she said. "Family visits may not be safe if the pandemic is still

going on, which means introducing her to the world via social media, and video calls or meetings through a window with no contact and it breaks my heart thinking this might happen, because being our first, when we found out we were pregnant last year it made us so happy to be able to share our little one with the world, and now this will completely change everything."

Not having the support at home after the baby is born, if people are still required to be social distancing, is terrifying for Fisher. But still, she has hope for herself and fellow pregnant women and new moms living through a life-altering experience during a global pandemic.

"I guess it would all come down to having people understand we are scared, but for anyone going through a pregnancy during this time or has had a baby recently, having them know we are all in this together no matter how lonely it may feel at times and we can all only hope this will make us stronger women at the end of this tunnel."

The Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft, which have an average of nine clients due each month, initiated screening prior to every in-person visit, and have decreased in-person visits to the minimum, as recommended by the World Health Organization, supplementing with phone and video visits between in-person calls. In-person, the midwives have requested that only pregnant clients attend while their support people join by phone. Visits to labs and ultrasounds have been decreased with more bloodwork being done in office, including no longer requiring women to attend the hospital to receive Rhlg injections.

"This pandemic affects us all and like



Registered midwife Stephanie Simon of Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft said local midwives are continuing to be available for families, and reminds women in their pregnancies to try to hold onto joy as they live through a life-altering experience during a pandemic. /Submitted

all health-care providers, we're trying to balance safe and appropriate care with pandemic safety and minimizing infection, while also trying our best to respect midwifery values and the fact that birth is a life-changing event," said Stephanie Simon, registered midwife with Midwifery Services of Haliburton-Bancroft.

"During appointments with families, we certainly notice that this is a huge stressor for women in pregnancy and the postpartum. We're doing our best to relay accurate and up-to-date information to all of our families."

That information was being compiled by midwives as the incidents of COVID-19 infections spread.

"We are fortunate, in some ways, that China was able to accumulate and share some early data from their outbreak," said Simon. "The information available is overall reassuring. Pregnant women do not appear to be more susceptible to [COVID-19] compared to the general population, nor do they appear to experience any greater severity in symptoms. This doesn't mean that pregnant women can't get severely ill from [COVID-19], it simply means they are no less likely to do so than another healthy individual. This is actually positive as many other respiratory infections, such as some strains of influenza, impact pregnant women to a greater degree. So we are thankful for that."

Some cases of newborns with COVID-19 have been reported, but Simon said that even in those cases, research has been generally reassuring.

"Children tend to experience a mild illness and recover well," she said. "There is currently no evidence that the virus can be transmitted from pregnant women to the baby before birth (vertical transmission). There is conflicting data as to whether COVID-19 increases preterm labour; we don't have any clear information on this yet. We do urge pregnant women and their families to minimize in-person interaction with others outside of their home and isolate for the final weeks of pregnancy to minimize the chance of being ill during delivery as this certainly will alter our approach to

see IN-PERSON page 12

Social Distancing will be good for my garden: two pruning jobs

Part four in a series of garden tasks we can complete while practicing social distancing

HALIBURTON COUNTY is littered with old, wizened apple trees, remnants of early homesteads and unsuccessful efforts to tame the wild, rocky natural lands. Most set-

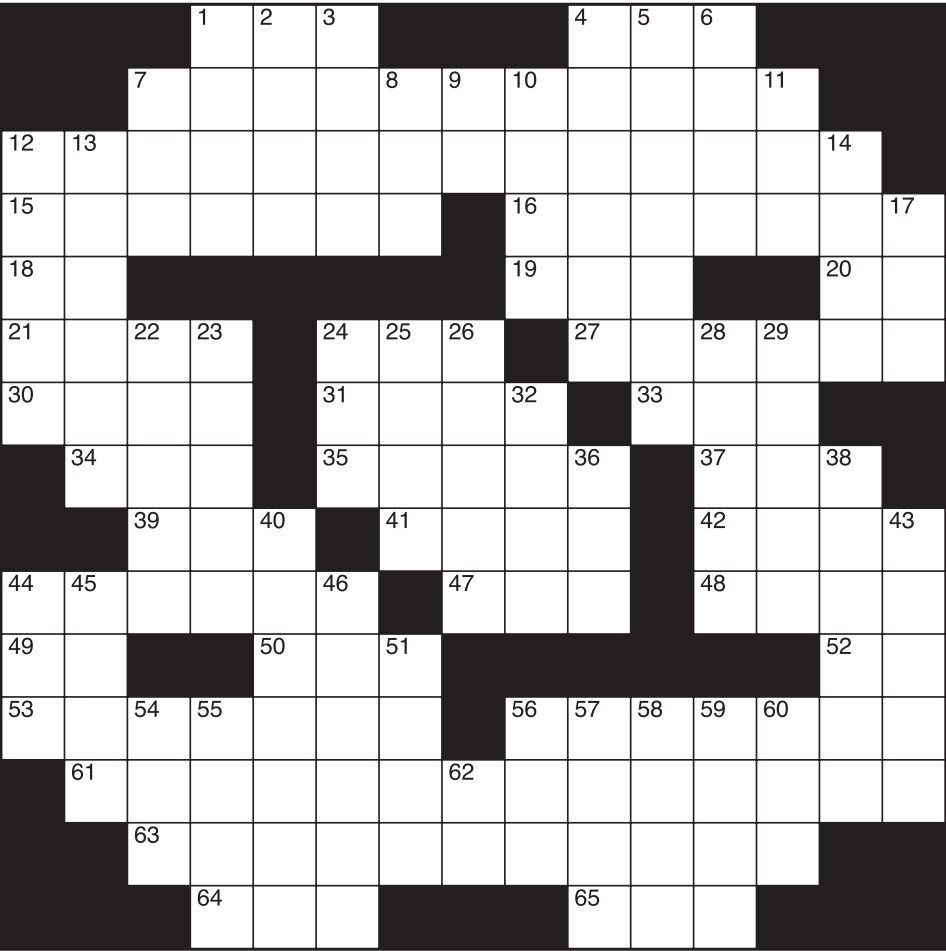
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- CLUES ACROSS

 - 1. Germanic mythological god
 - 4. Cash machine
 - 7. Improvement
 - 12. What voters want
 - 15. Sheepish
 - 16. Placed at powerful level
 - 18. Measure of illumination
 - 19. Trent Reznor's band
 - 20. Commercial
 - 21. Amounts of time
 - 24. English broadcaster
 - 27. Rolls of tobacco
 - 30. Position
 - 31. Expresses pleasure
 - 33. Corporate exec (abbr.)
 - 34. Body part
 - 35. Bleated
 - 37. Businessman
 - 39. Beats per minute
 - 41. Defunct Italian monetary unit
 - 42. Broken branch
 - 44. Put in advance
 - 47. Arrest
 - 48. Prefix indicating adjacent to
 - 49. Artificial intelligence
 - 50. Disfigure
 - 52. The Fighting Irish
- (abbr.)

 - 53. Not in any place
 - 56. Predict
 - 61. A system of getting stuff from one place to another
 - 63. Philosophy of the principles of things
 - 64. US gov't office (abbr.)
 - 65. Seaborgium's former name (abbr.)

CLUES DOWN

 - 1. Network connector
 - 2. Primordial matter
 - 3. Get up
 - 4. Uncoordinated
 - 5. Ill-fated cruise ship
 - 6. Work hard
 - 7. Drivers' speed
 - 8. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
 - 9. Healthcare pro
 - 10. Egyptian Sun god
 - 11. Expresses the negative
 - 12. Some are three-legged
 - 13. Clothing manufacturer
 - 14. Close by
 - 17. Tooth caregiver
 - 22. Housing material
 - 23. Flows through
 - 24. Founder of Babism
- 25. Honorific title
 - 26. A type of letter
 - 28. Seize and hold firmly
 - 29. Artery
 - 32. Body fluids
 - 36. Press against lightly
 - 38. An island in the Pacific
 - 40. A reminder of past events
 - 43. Austrian spa town
 - 44. Peter's last name
 - 45. Something a mob might do
 - 46. Of the bones of the feet
 - 51. "Amazing Stories" writer
 - 54. Nazi-resistant youth group (abbr.)
 - 55. Used to have (Scottish)
 - 56. A way to cook
 - 57. Japanese port city
 - 58. Type of precipitation
 - 59. Engrave
 - 60. Female sibling
 - 62. Expresses emotion

Answers on page 14

diseased fruits of interest only to insects, rodents, foxes and deer.

Most are very old cultivars no longer commercially available and have been replaced by newer, disease resistant varieties. Nonetheless, when loosely managed, these trees will produce nice crops for applesauce, Mom's apple pie or for a munch when out walking the dog.

A perfect example is a timeworn tree that provides shade for the hammock in the summer. It is completely engulfed by cedars and the silhouette has been warped by the shade. Like most of these old trees, it is showing signs of fire blight, a disease common in pears, apples, crabapple and other related plants. The tree didn't receive any care last year and needs pruning to remove diseased branches, over growth and to improve the shape.

Here are some tips that I followed based on advice from a farmer friend and a very old educational brochure from the University of Michigan, "Renovating old, abandoned apple trees" by Charles D. Kesner and Keith L. Lamkin, 1986.

- Prune in early spring before new growth begins – usually April.
- Use sharp pruners, pruning saw or chainsaw for large cuts. Disinfect tools before and after with a quick spray of isopropyl alcohol.
- Make sure there is no serious rot in trunk or large limbs. (If so, think removal.)
- Apple trees can be aggressively pruned but each cut will produce lots and lots of new growth. A complete rejuvenation is easier to manage if you do it over three seasons, one-third each year.
- Remove any dead or diseased wood.
- Remove vertical waterspout growth – vertical new stems with smooth bark. (If removing large limbs to reduce the height of the tree, cut back to eight inches above a healthy waterspout that can then be trained as a support branch.)
- Remove branches that cross and rub

each other, as the bruised areas are prone to disease.

- Remove branches that grow toward the centre of the tree. The goal is to open the tree to light so that fruit will not be shaded.

- Finally, go back over the tree and head-up the shoots that are left. This is cutting the tips back to a lateral (side-facing) bud, to force the tree to grow out rather than up.

- Don't forget to remove some of the competing woodland growth to allow more light for your renovated tree.

It is worth mentioning that the tree will not produce market-ready fruit unless you want to begin a spraying program. We don't spray and just accept any flawed apples.

On a personal note, be sure your garden assistant is on the same page in the pruning book. I mentioned the possibility of removal and my significant other nearly cut down a perfectly good tree. He loves his chainsaw.

After the apple tree, it was time to tackle the hydrangeas sprinkled around the property. I grow several panicle types known for their cone-shaped flowers. These are commonly called PG (stands for paniculata grandiflora) and include cultivars such as "Limelight" and "Fire and Ice." I also like the smooth hydrangea cultivars, descended from a selection of a North American native called "Annabelle." These have snowball-shaped blooms in white, green and even pink in new varieties like "Invincible Spirit."

I was going to write a long bit about pruning these lovely shrubs, but with the extra time I have social distancing, I found a wonderful YouTube clip from "The Impatient Gardener" in southeastern Wisconsin. Trust me, it's the best advice. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r5LHyYtdddU>.

Re instructions on begonia propagation from last week's column: Slice a few veins on the bottom of the leaf and flip it over so that the bottom of the leaf is on the soil surface.



Musings



A well-pruned apple tree provides shade during the summer months.



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COVID-19

Coronavirus

Possibility of library layoffs broached at board meeting

CHAD INGRAM

Staff Reporter

Whether or not some staff of the Haliburton County Public Library might be laid off during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was discussed during an April 8 meeting of the library board.

The library's branches have been closed since March 16 amid the outbreak, with the library offering a variety of online services and some staff still working from the buildings using a variety of safety protocols. These include having just one person in smaller buildings, maintaining physical distancing in larger buildings, regular hand-washing and disinfecting of surfaces.

The library system has 17 employees, including five full-time senior staff members, and 12 part-time employees who include branch supervisors, programmers, branch assistants and a courier. Three employees are currently on emergency leave.

"Over the last three weeks, we have taken as many services as possible online," library CEO Bessie Sullivan told board members. "... We're just starting to get into the groove now."

Some programming includes an online version of the library's Makers series, the planned facilitation of online book clubs, and popular digital daily storytime (Monday through Friday) starring the HCPL's library assistants. The library is also

assisting partner organizations with their online programming. In addition to creating online programming, staff are also performing a variety of tasks including inventory, the cancellation and re-organization of certain services, setting up systems to facilitate working from home, community outreach, etc. According to Sullivan, who said full-time staffers have been working more than full-time organizing the transition process, all of that work should last about three months.

"These are trying times for all agencies and organizations," said Algonquin Highlands Mayor Carol Moffatt, noting the situation is the same for municipalities, particularly when it comes to some part-time staff. "Depending how long this goes, there's not going to be a need for those folks."

Moffatt wondered what the plan was for the library.

"I think we would mimic the [county] process," Sullivan said. After a three-month period, should the situation remain as it currently is, "we would continue to need at least half the staff," Sullivan said.

Highlands East Deputy Mayor Cec Ryall said in his estimation, the situation as it is was likely to last until at least late June.

"That should be a question we should seriously consider at the time," Ryall said.

Dysart et al Mayor Andrea Roberts thought any conversation regarding layoffs was premature for the time being.

"You just don't want to get too far

ahead of yourself," Roberts said, adding that government directives and the general situation regarding COVID-19 changing on basically a daily basis. "We only know what we know today."

There was also some talk of the possible secondment of library employees for purposes elsewhere within the county, similar to processes happening in some other municipalities.

County Warden Liz Danielsen said there's been no such discussion at the county level as of yet.

The digital storytimes have been very popular, garnering as many as 3,000 views, Sullivan said. There was some question of possibly decreasing the frequency of them as school-aged children begin an online learning curriculum in place of attending school, but Sullivan indicated they were largely intended for

toddler-aged kids. "It's for people who are stuck at home entertaining kids," she said.

Ryall said he thought the library should be doing all it could to assist parents cooped up at home with children, and Moffatt questioned perhaps continuing some of the popular digital offerings even after the pandemic is over. Sullivan said that would require additional resources.

While the library has asked that patrons with materials keep them at home for the time being, Sullivan said materials do continue to get dropped off, and staff handle them with gloves and sanitized wipes.

The situation has also led to a rise in the borrowing of e-books.

"March actually had the biggest circulation of e-books we've ever had," Sullivan said.

Emergency eye care available

Although the office of Haliburton optometrist Rene Benoit is closed to regular appointments during the coronavirus pandemic, he is available for urgent and emergency eye-related concerns for anyone in the county (patients and non-patients).

Dr. Benoit closed his clinic to everyday eye care on March 25.

He will answer phone calls weekdays from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 to 5 p.m. (excluding weekends and holidays). He is in regular contact with the county's family doctors and the eye surgeon on-call in Lindsay and Peterborough.

Call 705-457-1400 to get in touch with Dr. Benoit.

In-person interactions limited

from page 9

delivery. Breastfeeding continues to be recommended for all infants, regardless of risk factors or exposure to [COVID-19]. This is because breastfeeding has an impressive impact on the infant's immune system and allows the maternal immune system to support the infant."

Clients preparing to give birth during the pandemic have been asking the midwives about alternative plans, possible risks, and best practices to be safe.

"It's been a big discussion topic in almost every appointment," said Simon. "The biggest concerns are how to minimize their risk of contracting [COVID-19] and what the hospital environment might look like should they plan or need to go there. Things are changing quickly so we are doing our best to ensure that we are providing up to date and accurate information."

"Although the Canadian governing bodies have not offered any pregnancy-specific recommendations, other health authorities have encouraged pregnant women to practice social distancing and work from home if able and if not, to stop work at or around 28 weeks. We have been suggesting that women in the final month of pregnancy consider self-isolating to reduce the potential for illness during labour and delivery and subsequently risk to the infant."

"Ideally, everyone, whether pregnant or not, should limit their interactions to immediate family members who they live with. For low risk women, we have been having more discussions about choice of

birthplace and particularly about home birth. We have ample research that supports home birth as a safe, if not safer, location for birth in healthy women. Certainly, with the current situation, more women are pursuing or considering home birth as this is an environment where families can control their exposure. We will continue to support women in their choice of birthplace. If a woman has COVID-19 we are recommending a hospital birth."

Simon said that, "one noticeable change for us is that the midwives no longer have in-person interactions among ourselves to protect one another in case of exposure to [COVID-19]." Though they do have access to some personal protective equipment, Simon said they have been "made aware that further access to items such as gloves and masks are restricted and may become difficult to acquire as this goes on."

For those experiencing their pregnancy and birth during this time, Simon offers this:

"It's tough and being in a pandemic can overshadow the joy that usually accompanies pregnancies. Try to hold onto that. We know pregnancy is often an uncertain and overwhelming season of life in general. We're still available 24/7 by paging service and will continue to be here for families. We will provide updates as available via social media. For those who aren't yet our clients, please still contact us so that we can be a support for you. Take care of yourselves. Make a physical and mental health goal each day. Do things that bring you joy. Check out some online prenatal classes. Stay home and wash your hands."



Easter online

Reverend Harry Morgan prepares to broadcast his sermon via YouTube on Good Friday, April 10 in the library at the United Church in Haliburton. Morgan provided his followers with the live-stream, including recordings made earlier and then also had an Easter Sunday service online. Like other religious leaders, his sermons are being conducted online to encourage social distancing efforts to reduce the spread of the coronavirus./

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Central Food Network offering help to anyone who needs it during health crisis

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

We are here to help: that’s the message from the Central Food Network, a registered charity that includes the Highlands East Food Hub and the Cardiff Community Food Bank.

Carol Greenwood, co-ordinator of the Highlands East Food Hub in Wilberforce and chairperson of the Central Food Network for the past 18 months, said the organization wants people to know they’re providing assistance.

“The main thing that we’re trying to get across is that we are here for people. We have a number of different programs we are offering that we can try and tailor to individual needs of individuals, whether that’s needing food from the food bank because salaries have been interrupted, or needing help to get groceries in the home. There are a variety of different programs that we have and it’s a great community with community spirit and please feel comfortable coming and use our services. We’re here to help,” she said. “We’re still concerned that there are a number of people in the community that could benefit from our services, but are not using them.”

Last month, the Cardiff and Wilberforce food banks provided food to 155 individuals, 44 of them children under 18 years old and 37 people over 60 years old. In the last week, Wilberforce’s food bank saw an increase of between five and 10 households. Cardiff hasn’t yet seen an increase, though some past clients have returned.

Cardiff Community Food Bank manager Cam McKenzie said his concern is not the short term, but what will happen down the road.

“It’s going to be the long haul that I think is going to be an issue,” he said.

The Wilberforce food bank is operating with regular hours, but clients are asked to remain outside and a volunteer will provide a pre-made hamper of food. Delivery to clients can be arranged.

In addition, volunteers from the food bank are co-ordinating with Wilberforce Foodland, making deliveries to seniors, those who are ill and those who should not be visiting the grocery store in person.

More than 50 deliveries have been made by 10 volunteer drivers, who have driven an estimated 1,000 kilometres since they started at the end of March. Deliveries are made six days a week throughout Highlands East. If an order has been placed by 10 a.m., the drivers will complete the order and make the delivery later that day.

Greenwood moved to Wilberforce three years ago after working as a professor of nutritional sciences at the University of Toronto. It’s an area of study that applies to her volunteer role.

“Issues of food security have always been dear to my heart,” she said. “You know being able to work with boots on the ground is something that I’m finding very rewarding.”

McKenzie had the same message as Greenwood when it comes to Cardiff.

“Anybody that needs help right now [is welcome] is the message we want to emphasize – that if you have never had to access a food bank, if you need to, do it now. Get ahold of us,” he said. “Right now we’re worrying about registration after ... It’s a situation none of us in this country, maybe in the world, have we faced what we’re dealing with now. We’re here to help the best we can.”

McKenzie, who has been the manager for the past three years, said there have been adjustments for the safety of clients and the food bank volunteers.

Due to the small size of the food bank building, he said it was impossible to allow people to come and maintain the social distancing inside the building so a delivery program was initiated on April 1.

“I will phone them and let them know it’s coming and

“

It’s a situation none of us in this country, maybe in the world, have we faced what we’re dealing with now.

— Cam McKenzie



Volunteer driver Nadine Jones loads her vehicle for a delivery in Highlands East, as part of an effort to help people with getting their groceries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Photo submitted by Tina Jackson

I just set it on their porch and set it on their step and no contact. They might wave at me from their window and we’re good to go,” he said.

McKenzie and Kathy Blizzard make most of the deliveries in Cardiff.

The Highlands East councillor, who has filled his time at the food bank instead of at council and committee meetings, which were suspended during the health crisis, adds another concern was about trying to enforce physical distancing in the parking lot where people cluster and socialize.

The system has also been good for the food bank, spreading out the workload of two to three hours out over a week for the volunteers, he said. Despite the food bank’s new practice of sanitizing before work, during and after, some volunteers have had to withdraw their services due to health concerns.

McKenzie said the Cardiff food bank clients have helped ensure their shelves don’t go completely bare by communicating what preferences they have instead of receiving anything they won’t eat or haven’t completely finished since the last order.

“It’s stretched out what we have here,” he said.

The other important assist for the location was the support from Bancroft Foodland, which sells bags of goods to the public to benefit the food bank, allowing clients to have access to staples such as pasta and sauce, he said.

How can the public help food banks?

Greenwood, like McKenzie, discourages the public from buying more groceries than they need.

She supports self-isolation to minimize exposure and welcomes financial support because the challenge isn’t food scarcity in the market, but a lack of discounts.

“I must say across all of our food banks, Minden, Haliburton and Wilberforce/Cardiff, the people have been extremely generous and we’re very grateful for that. On the other hand, we see this going on for the long term and that our costs of being able to serve what we think is going to be a growing number of clients as people are suffering from loss wages. Yes, trying to help us cover those costs would obviously be appreciated,” Greenwood said.

McKenzie said the food bank shelves in Cardiff are not

full, but they will be “comfortable” to service clients for the next two weeks.

The challenge is finding a wholesaler that will enable a large purchase, which is not possible with current purchase restrictions to discourage hoarding.

“We’ve had significant amount of financial support to Central Food Network. The bottle-neck now might be everyone in the same boat is to find a wholesaler who has product. That hasn’t happened for us yet,” he said.

Anyone interested in being a client of either the Highlands Food Hub or the Cardiff Community Food Bank, call 705-448-9711 or email tinajackson@centralfoodnet.org. For grocery deliveries, call or email your grocery order to Foodland at 705-448-2811 or foodland7256@hotmail.com and be sure to include your name, phone number and address.

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Former Hawks player joins Battalion

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

The North Bay Battalion fans will soon learn what Haliburton Highlands character and work ethic is all about when Alex Little makes his OHL debut this coming season.

The former Red Hawks hockey player, who played for the red and white in 2018-2019, was drafted 41st overall last week by the Battalion in the 2020 OHL under-18 priority selection. He joins Ty Nelson of the Oakville Rangers, who was selected first overall.

Little watched the draft from his home in Minden with his parents via a live-stream on YouTube.

"I was in shock at first but my family was quick to congratulate me. It took a little bit to set in but it was a great feeling, knowing that a dream since I was a little kid was now real life. This definitely ranks number one for personal achievements so far. It's what I've been working for my whole life up to this point, so for it to actually happen it feels pretty surreal," he wrote in a message.

He is excited for the next chapter of his hockey career after he was drafted by the OHL's North Bay Battalion, but isn't looking past the latest achievement.

"I'm just taking it step by step, really. It started first with making a team here and then making a AAA team and then juniors are the next step. Taking it one step at a time and hope for the best, really," he said.

Little started skating at three and playing hockey as a goalie at six years old in Haliburton at the local rink. That lasted only a year before he switched to playing defence.

The five-foot-11 defenceman played for the AAA North Bay Trappers major midget team (and played for Trappers' affiliate team, the Powassan Voodoos in the Northern Ontario Junior Hockey League) this past season after playing for the Hawks and the AAA Central Ontario Wolves minor midget team in Lindsay the year before.

As a member of the Trappers, Little was named the Great North Midget League's most gentlemanly player and was named to the GNML All-Star team, as a result of his 29 points (nine goals and 20 assists) tallied in 38 regular-season games.

There have been other Haliburton players drafted to the Battalion such as NHLer Matt Duchene, who plays for the Nashville Predators and former NHLer Cody Hodgson, who was also drafted a year before Duchene. The last local hockey player to be drafted was Ryan Hall two years ago.

Little said he remembers watching Duchene play for the Battalion in Brampton when he was six – the Battalion has since moved to North Bay.

"I cheered for the Battalion way back then. To see the success that Matt had makes me confident that it's a good program run in North Bay. It also feels like it was meant to be, considering the last three hockey players drafted from Haliburton County were drafted to [the Battalion],"



Former Red Hawks defenceman Alex Little is excited for the next step in his hockey career after being drafted by the OHL's North Bay Battalion in the 2020 OHL under-18 Priority Selection. This past year Little played for the North Bay Trappers AAA midget team and was on the Hawks varsity hockey team in the 2018-19 season./DARREN LUM Staff

he wrote. The team's move from Brampton to North Bay suits Little well, who said hockey is the night out for people on a Saturday night during the hockey season.

He welcomes the thought that he could be part of another wave of skilled hockey players from the area to advance to the higher levels of hockey.

"I helped out with the Timbits and I just love hockey and to keep it in the community and get more and more people playing it, it would be awesome. It's not a cheap sport at all, but if I'm part of helping kids love the sport still [then that's great. I'm] really just playing for fun. That's how I got here is [by] playing for fun. If you think of it as a job from when you're little then it takes away from why you're really out and a part of the sport," he said.

He is thankful for the support he has received from his parents Chris and Alec and older sisters Erin and Jamie.

"They've pushed me through everything, whether it was sports or academics. They were there for me to make sure that I'm doing my best and have what I needed to succeed. Really good support," he said. "Coaches of course. They're always a big part of it. I've had great coaches my whole life in Haliburton and moving away I still got that same support so it's a really big help to where I've got so far."

Without this support, he can't imagine he would have been drafted to the OHL.

Little loves the competitiveness of hockey and the feeling he gets skating with the puck.

"There's a rush, skating around so fast out there on the ice. There's a bit of physicality ... I love scoring. I love contact. The speed. It's an all-around great game," he said.

Although he only played for the Red Hawks, who were coached by Jason Morissette in the 2018-2019 season, the experience has stayed with him because of the people he met and the lessons he learned.

"You get people from all categories of hockey out there. From people who stay at home and play to AAA players. And to play with older guys and just learn their ways and learn ... new tricks. And how to be not only as an athlete outside of school, but somebody who shows good character from older guys like [that year's captain] Owen Smith and [goalie] Carson Sisson, who have been through the program. That was really cool," he said. "Playing for your own school and getting your own fan support. It's pretty cool because when I played in Lindsay you don't know a lot of the people. Like here you have people making signs for your school. It's really awesome."

Getting a fix of two-wheeled fun during COVID-19

DARREN LUM

Staff Reporter

A middle-school teacher with a love for cycling is trying to get as many young people on a bike as possible during the health crisis.

Blake Paton, a teacher at J. Douglas Hodgson Elementary School, is asking the public to donate unloved and derelict bicycles, which he will repair and distribute to local families in need. Pick-up is also available if required. Paton is also offering repairs for people for free and is encouraging those who are able, to donate to the food bank as payment.

Coming up on his 25th year of teaching in the area, he wanted to offer others the same freedom he feels when he goes for a ride.

"You know that there's bikes out there that don't have riders who love them and there are riders out there who [would love] to have a bike. It's a matter of connecting the dots. I can't really do my job as a phys-ed teacher the way I normally would, but what I can do is help put kids on bikes so that when I tell them, as part of their daily fit-

ness routine to go out and get a bike ride in or run then they can do that. It's a time when kids have been cooped up at home and they're stuck on the property and the roads are almost traffic free right now. It's like, 'Hey, go for a bike ride. Go for a bike ride and feel a little bit of freedom [from] this madness that we're living through right now,'" he said.

Catherine Carr of Haliburton picked up a repaired mountain bike for her 12-year-old son, Addison.

She said her son was excited to ride his bike, but discovered it was in disrepair and had been using her bike in the interim.

Carr learned about the opportunity on Facebook and welcomed the chance to donate to the food bank so her son could ride his bike.

Paton said being outside on a bicycle is one of the things people can still do.

"If bikes aren't working then kids can't use them. If you don't have a bike then you can't bike, so it's a problem we can fix," he said.

For more information contact Paton through Twitter at @monsieurpaton, and email at Blake.Paton@tlds.on.ca or see Blake Paton on Facebook.



Teacher Blake Paton is looking to the public for bikes he can repair so he can donate them to children in need, or help those who need repairs so they can ride during the health crisis. For more information contact Paton through Twitter at @monsieurpaton, and email at Blake.Paton@tlds.on.ca or see Blake Paton at Facebook./DARREN LUM Staff

The road to the Highlands Opera Studio

HUW MORGAN

Special to the Echo

Imagine the pressure! You are a young, talented opera singer looking to launch your career in the major opera houses of the world. If you get selected at this audition, you'll be enrolled in a five-week, all expenses paid master class with some of the leading opera coaches drawn from around the world. Best of all, the master classes will be held in one of the most beautiful places in the world, Haliburton. At the end of your classes, you'll be called on to perform an opera program consisting of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Mozart's *Don Giovanni* at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion for local opera fans. But first, you'll have to impress the judges.

Your audition takes place in the large living room in a church in mid-town Toronto. Facing you sit your evaluators, two of Canada's opera royalty, the husband and wife team of Richard Margison and Valerie Kuinka. Margison is one of Canada's most famous tenors and had a distinguished career performing at major opera houses around the world. Kuinka also has had a fantastic career, performing as a violist with the Canadian Opera Company as well as a stage director for major opera houses including the Metropolitan Opera. The two judges are cordial and encouraging, but the odds are stacked against you. Only 20 singers will be selected from 132 applicants, so the pressure is on to perform your best. You hand your music to Trevor Chartrand, the accompanist, who launches into the introduction to one of your audition pieces and now, it's up to you...

Who are these young people who trekked to auditions in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and New York vying for a spot in the Highlands Opera Studio program? I had a chance to catch up to two singers who were part of the program in 2019 and are hoping to return.

Leanne Kaufman comes from a musical family and started singing seriously in Grade 12. Her sister had taken voice lessons and recommended that Leanne take it on too. She obtained a bachelor of voice degree from the University of British Columbia and a masters degree from the University of Toronto.

Kaufman loves live operatic music because it tells great stories. She also likes singing in a variety of languages. Her biggest challenge in opera is learning how to be comfortable moving around the stage and communicating to the audience. So far in her career, Kaufman has earned a spot in the Canadian Opera Chorus, but she is looking for opportunities to take on roles in major opera productions.

Kaufman wants to return to Haliburton because it offers coaching with such a high level of opera expertise and gives her a chance to build rapport with colleagues and friends. She loves the Haliburton studio setting because there is no stuffiness. It's a relaxed environment in a beautiful setting. She also appreciates the opportunity to sing in front of influential coaches drawn from New York's Metropolitan Opera, The Lyric Opera of Chicago and Opera Montreal. There are also agents who come to hear the singers. Acquiring an agent is a huge step in launching a singing career.

Maeve Palmer started singing as a youngster in Irish festivals, singing with her family. Her dad is an oboist and musicologist. She begged her family for sing-



Maeve Palmer was part of the Highlands Opera Studio last year and hopes to return in 2020. She started singing as a youngster in Irish festivals, singing with her family. Palmer did her undergraduate and masters degrees in voice at the University of Toronto and went on to do the Rebanks family fellowship at the Royal Conservatory of Music. /HUW MORGAN Special to the Echo

ing lessons at nine years old and knew that she wanted a career in music.

Palmer did her undergraduate and masters degrees in voice at the University of Toronto and went on to do the Rebanks family fellowship at the Royal Conservatory of Music.

According to Palmer, the Highlands Opera Studio is the most supportive opera program in Ontario because it is fully funded, including room and board. She also loves the Haliburton setting and feels that the environment is very supportive of the participants.

As I watched and listened to Kaufman and Palmer and all the other participants, I was struck by how difficult it must be to be in Kuinka and Margison's shoes. All the young singers have been through years of singing lessons, obtained advanced degrees at opera schools, and performed in many school productions and opera choruses. They sing wonderfully and present themselves as polished performers. To the untrained ear, there is little to choose from between each candidate. Yet, Margison and Kuinka must cast this year's operas and decide on who will make it and who will not. It is an unenviable task.

It's so much easier for us, the people who live or vacation in Haliburton. We get to enjoy the fruit of Margison and Kuinka's labour, the annual productions of the Highlands Opera Studio. We also get a chance to sit in at some of the master classes to learn a little bit of what it is like to be an aspiring opera singer.

This year's Highlands Opera Studio runs from July 19 to Aug. 24 and features three master classes, a pop concert, an alumni concert, karaoke at McKeck's, and three opera productions, Purcell's *Dido & Aeneas*, a Canadian opera yet to be named, and Mozart's famous *Don Giovanni*. Details can be found at the Highlands Opera Studio website.

To find the most up to date status on the Highlands Opera Studio, go to: highlandsoperastudio.com/phone/covid-19.html.

Right, two of Canada's opera royalty, the husband and wife team of Richard Margison and Valerie Kuinka, are the evaluators for Highlands Opera Studio.



Above, Leanne Kaufman comes from a musical family and started singing seriously in Grade 12. She obtained a bachelor of voice degree from the University of British Columbia and a masters degree from the University of Toronto. She hopes to return to HOS in 2020.



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A detailed job description is available on the municipal website **www.dysartetal.ca**.

Interested individuals are invited to email a detailed resume and cover letter in confidence to:

Laurie Salvatori, Deputy Clerk

lsalvatori@dysartetal.ca

No Later Than 12:00 pm Tuesday, April 28th, 2020.

**** Interviews will commence once the municipal office is reopened to the public and the Municipality has lifted its State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 Pandemic****

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- Affordable cost options



640 IN MEMORIAM

640 IN MEMORIAM

Barbara Morrison
Sept. 7, 1963 - April 15, 2018

*You never stop loving someone.
You just learn to live
without them.*

Love Les & Family

Vic Stewart
June 13, 1937 - April 17, 2007

*You answered
my dream,
And we became a
winning team.*

Miss You
Carol

**ALWAYS
REMEMBER**

**To place your
Memoriam**

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INSIDE
THIS WEEK:

A LIFT TO THE HEART
Community's generosity makes life a lot easier for Lee Ann Reynolds

A \$15,000 CARROT
County agrees to give financial incentive to doctor to relocate to Haliburton

FESTIVALS ON ICE
Haliburton prepares for 50th carnival while Wilberforce applauds its skaters

www.haliburtonecho.on.ca
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THE ECHO

HALIBURTON COUNTY

Tuesday, April 1, 2003
Vol. 120 No. 16
\$1 including GST

Hospitals restrict visitors to limit risk of SARS

MARTHA PERKINS
Editor

Visits to the local hospitals are being restricted and patients who do not require emergency care are not being transferred to hospitals in the Greater Toronto Area as local healthcare providers join the province-wide attempt to control the spread of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

There are no hospitals in this region which have SARS patients and healthcare agencies want to keep it that way.

"Haliburton Highlands Health Services officials are exercising caution and restricting visitors and non-essential activities to both the Haliburton and Minden sites as the public health vigilance continues with SARS," says an HHSS press release issued on Monday morning. "These extra precautions are to ensure we are taking all of the steps necessary to protect our patients, residents, staff and community."

"No visitors will be allowed into either site except for family and significant others to critically ill patients or residents."

These restrictions apply to the acute care unit and Highland Wood long-term care unit in Haliburton and Hyland Crest in Minden. The emergency departments in both Haliburton and Minden are still open.

"It's quiet [at Highland Wood] but I didn't get the impression that people are upset," says Robin Anthony,

See **Paramedics** page 16



DARREN LUM/Echo

Mmm... the sweetest season

Josh Rowden opens wide to eat an entire piece of maple syrup taffy. Josh was one of many Stuart Baker Elementary School students enjoying a day at the Wintergreen maple syrup barn, learning how to turn a tree's sap into one of the golden pleasures of life.

Renowned wolf whisperer comes to Haliburton April 1

STEVE GALEA
Special to The Echo

Fans of wolf lore will be thrilled to hear that Dr. William Edison Howell, the renowned "Wolf Whisperer", will be in Haliburton tonight for a demonstration of his legendary wolf whispering techniques.

An internationally acclaimed "animal linguist", he is also the soft-spoken subject of a current National Film Board of Canada (NFBC) documentary. A NFBC film crew is accompanying Howell on his whistle-stop tour through known wolf habitat in central Ontario.

With formal training as an audiologist and biologist, Howell pioneered wolf whispering, which he describes "like wolf howling but much, much quieter..."

Currently, one of a select few in North America to master this technique, he is hoping to teach the skill to others as part of his ongoing crusade to make organized wolf howls a thing of the past.

"I'm morally opposed to wolf howls," he told *The Echo*. "Howling reinforces negative stereotypes about wolves. I don't believe we need to howl to make contact with wolves; they have amazing hearing."

He claims his approach to inter-species communication is more holistic and much better for wolves and the environment. Howell says, "The wolves we do see are generally more relaxed. When you whis-

See **Wolves** page 9

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P.T. CRUISER
Sik #2007
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Sik #2011
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THIS WEEK'S FEATURE:

"In Beautiful Downtown Minden" "The #1 Selling Chrysler Dealership in the Highlands" (705) 286-1561

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Kennisis Lake

Ultimate privacy with 6.90 acres and 550 ft of clean clear shoreline. Granite walkways and patios. Over 4000 sq ft of living space. This custom built "True North" log home has recently had numerous quality upgrades. Too many to mention. You'll appreciate them when you see them. 5 bdrms, 4 baths, full finished bsmt, insulated triple garage with finished loft.

\$2,389,000



Spruce Lake

Custom built 3BR, 3 bath, waterfront home/cottage. With 25 acres, 225 ft of frtg and Southern exposure. This private and peaceful property. open concept living with beautiful maple cabinetry. Cozy sunroom, gorgeous gazebo or stone patio with firepit. 2 BR guest cottage. Wheelchair accessible.

\$1,399,000



Kennisis Lake

Looking for a yr-rnd home or a 4-season cottage? Breathtaking 3-bdrm, 2 bath home. Custom built kitchen w/ granite countertops, built-in appliances, lrg island & much more. Low maintenance property is very energy efficient. 4 season sunroom. Ramps, paths & staircases suitable for all ages. 4 season bunkie & double car garage.

\$1,150,000



Grass Lake

Stunning 4 BR, 4 bath turn key home/cottage. Large sunny level lot. 100+ ft of private frtg and personal boat launch. Panoramic lake view. 80ft deck. High quality finishing's. Many upgrades in fall of 2018. Double attached garage and detached single garage with carport. Shows pride of ownership.

\$1,050,000



Colbourne Lake

Enjoy being close to nature in a quiet, private and peaceful setting. 4 BR, 2 bath log home/cottage. 25 acres of mature trees. Stunning open concept living. Engineered hardwood flooring, granite countertops and walk-out to covered wraparound deck. Heated workshop with loft.

\$999,000



Kennisis Lake

Low maintenance 4 season cottage. 4 bdrm, 1 Bath. Open concept. Oversized dining area perfect for hosting. Large deck with glass railing. Lots of space for the whole family to stay. Additional living space in bunkie. Beautifully landscaped maintenance free property. Granite flower beds and stairway to water. Ample privacy and much more.

\$899,000



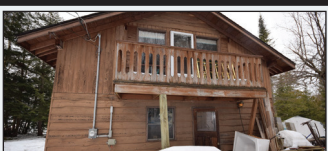
WENONA LAKE \$662,000

Looking for a quiet, calm and peaceful four season cottage or waterfront home? Look no further. This 3 BR, 3 bath immaculate cottage sits on a private lot. Large open concept living, excellent for hosting family gatherings. 125ft of frtg with stunning western views.



HALIBURTON LAKE \$619,000

Meticulously cared for 3 BR, 2 bath year round home/cottage. Private lot perfect for children to play. 176 ft frtg. Beautiful sandy beach, dock and full sun. Bright open concept living. Fully finished lower level. Enjoy the stunning views of nature. Detached single garage.



KENNISIS LAKE \$569,000

It's all about the lot!! Enjoy the gorgeous sunsets from this west facing level lot. Amazing rock shoreline, deep water entry is great for the avid swimmers. 125 ft frontage and year round road. Looking for a fixer upper this one is for you! 3 bdrms 2 with balconies.



CARROLL ROAD \$559,500

Every nature lovers dream! 3 bdrm, 2 bath rustic log home perfectly situated on 92ac. Deck around the front & side to enjoy your lovely yard, gardens & forest. Complete and utter privacy! Open concept kitchen-dining finished with wood cabinetry and grand wood cookstove. Large 3 bay garage.



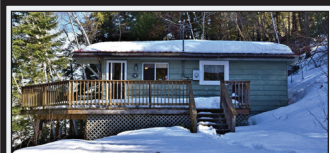
TWELVE MILE LAKE \$558,000

Offering a million-dollar view and spectacular sunsets! Bright open concept custom built 3 BR, 3 bath home. Floor to ceiling windows providing stunning lake views. Finished lower level. Cozy 3 season cedar screened in porch.



LONG LAKE \$499,900

Choose to build your dream cottage on this stunning property overlooking Long Lake or renovate the existing building which includes 2 BR and 1 full bath. Extensive 650' of water frontage. Private seasonal access and beautifully wooded 54+/- acres provides ample privacy.



MISKWABI LAKE \$486,900

Turnkey 3 bdrm, 4 season cottage. Open concept living space. Finished with pine walls and ceilings, gives the true cottage feel. Recently installed laminate flooring throughout, indoor sauna. This property has it all! Walk-out to wrap around deck. Bunkie for additional living space.



KOSHLONG LAKE \$458,500

Charming 2-bdrm 1 bath fully furnished cottage. Perfectly situated in a quiet bay. Pine walls and flooring throughout provides a true cottage feel. Finished bunkie. With many recent upgrades this cottage is move in ready. Large wrap around deck. Enjoy the panoramic views.



NESBITT ROAD \$399,999

Recently renovated 4 bdrm, 2 bath home. Beautifully treed level lot. Many recent upgrades include new roof, fully renovated bathrooms, luxury vinyl flooring throughout, blown-in insulation and much more. Finished lower level, large deck and heated attached double car garage.



PERCY LAKE \$379,000

Great traditional family cottage! 4 Bdrm, 1 bath cottage has open concept living space finished w/ laminate flooring and wood interior boasts cottage charm. Large lakefront deck. Southern exposure. The list doesn't stop there, sauna building at waters edge, large sitting deck and dock.



LITTLE GLAMOR LAKE \$359,000

Open concept traditional 3-bdrm cottage. Large windows and walk out to the lakefront deck. Sloping to level yard with lots of space for the kids and pets to run and play. Beautiful sand beach, southern views, outdoor shower, privacy and more. 1 bedroom bunkie.



AIRPORT ROAD \$259,000

We found the perfect starter or retirement home for you! 1.10-ac level lot surrounded by mature trees. Cozy 2-bdrm, 1 bath home with open concept kitchen and living space. In-floor radiant heat and recently installed vinyl flooring throughout. Attached oversized single insulated garage.

VACANT LOTS

NEW LISTING West Lake \$559,500 0.81AC

Drag Lake \$499,000 7.24AC

Colborne Lake \$289,000 4.83AC

Contau Lake \$165,000 1.33AC

Harburn Road \$99,000 44+AC

Irondale River \$79,900 3.22AC

Trappers Trail \$49,900 0.93AC

Deep Bay Rd \$49,000 3.05 AC

NEW LISTING Tattersal Road \$37,000 1.03AC

Fred Jones Road \$34,500 6.59AC

Twist Lane \$27,900 0.43 AC

Fred Jones Road \$25,000 0.38AC